



THORGAL

City of the Lost God

ROGINSKI - VAN HAMME



CS

 **CINEBOOK**
The 9th Art Publisher

Posada

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PREVIOUS EPISODES - THE LAND OF QA, THE EYES OF TANATLOC?



KRISS OF VALUOR, AN UNSCRUPULOUS WARRIOR, HAS FORCED THORGAL, AARICIA AND TJALL THE FIERY TO FOLLOW HER BEYOND THE GREAT WATERS TO THE DISTANT LAND OF QA.

THEIR MISSION: TO RETRIEVE THE MAGICAL HEADPIECE OF OGOAT, A GOD WHO EMERGED FROM THE SEA AND WHO NOW DREAMS OF RULING THE WORLD IN HIS BLOOD-THIRSTY MADNESS



TO DO THAT, THEY NEED TO REACH MAHAXATL, OGOAT'S SECRET CITY THAT WAS CREATED IN THE HEART OF AN IMPENETRABLE VIRGIN FOREST.

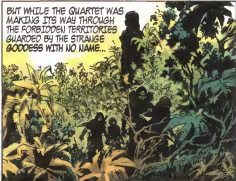
AS A SECURITY FOR OUR FRIENDS, ARGUIN TREE FOOT AND YOUNG JOLAN ARE HELD HOSTAGE WITH THE XIJIN, THE LAST PEOPLE IN THE LAND OF QA TO RESIST THE OGOAT HORDES.



IT WAS HERE THAT TANATLOC, THE OLD GOD PROTECTOR OF THE XIJIN, EXPLAINED TO JOLAN THE NATURE OF THE STRANGE POWERS THAT THE CHILD POSSESSED.



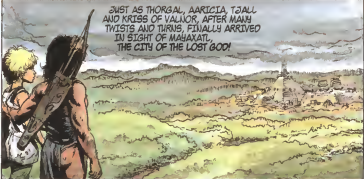
BUT WHILE THE QUARTET WAS MAKING ITS WAY THROUGH THE FORBIDDEN TERRITORIES GUARDED BY THE STRANGE GODDESS WITH NO NAME...



...TANATLOC DIED AND JOLAN BECAME THE NEW GOD OF THE XIJIN UNDER THE NAME HIRUKAN...

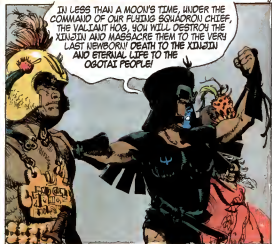
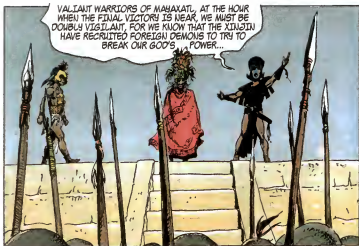


JUST AS THORGAL, AARICIA, TJALL AND KRISS OF VALUOR, AFTER MANY TWISTS AND TURNS, FINALLY ARRIVED IN SIGHT OF MAHAXATL, THE CITY OF THE LOST GOD!

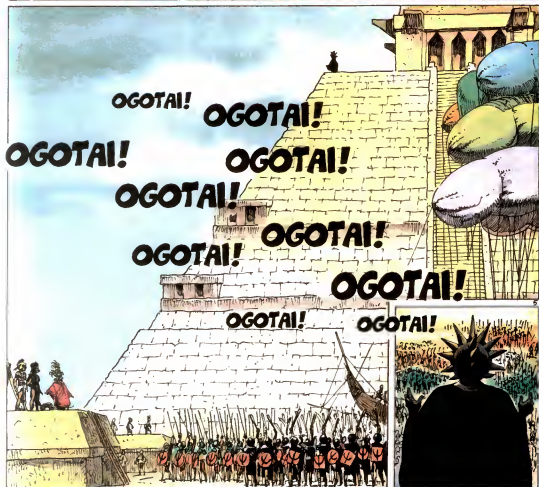






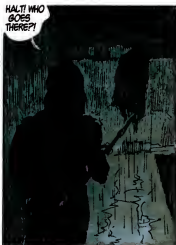


ETERNAL LIFE TO YOU, OH OGOTAI!
MAY YOUR NAME FINALLY SHINE
OVER ALL THE LIVING WORLD!
OGOTAI! OGOTAI!
OGOTAI!





HALT! WHO
GOES
THERE?!



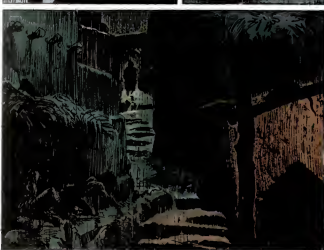
OH, IT... IT'S YOU,
LORD. YOU... YOU'RE
GOING TO THE
LOWER TOWN?

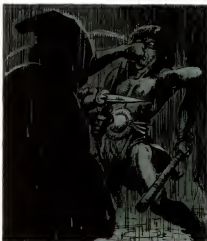
IS THERE A
PROBLEM
WITH THAT?



ERM, NO, BUT... WITHOUT
AN ESCORT, IT'S NOT
SAFE...

DON'T YOU
WORRY ABOUT THAT,
SOLDIER. STAY
ON GUARD.







THEY'RE HERE, LORD. I'VE
HIDDEN THEM IN MY CELLAR
AND I'VE FEED THEM.

ARE
YOU SURE
IT'S
THEM?



THEY'RE FOREIGNERS FROM
A RACE I'VE NEVER SEEN. A
MAN AND A WOMAN, AND THEY
HAD THE RING. BUT DO BE
CAREFUL: THEY DON'T SEEM
VERY EASY TO DEAL WITH.

THAT'S GOOD. CLOSE THE
TRAPDOOR AND MAKE SURE
NONE OF THOSE DRUNKEN
SOLDIERS COMES SNIF-
FLING ABOUT IN HERE.
YOUR LIFE AND MINE
DEPEND ON IT.

I... I'LL
KEEP A CLOSE
WATCH, LORD;
YOU CAN COUNT
ON ME.



DON'T BE AFRAID.
I'M YOUR FRIEND...
WHERE IS YOUR
COMPANION?...



HERE, CAN YOU
TELL US WHO THIS
"FRIEND" IS?



MY NAME IS HOB. I'M THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE MAHAXATL FIGHTING SQUADRON.

STRANGE ALLY, THE OGOTAI ARMY'S CHIEF!

AND YET IT IS SO. I'M A CHAAM AND A WARRIOR, AND THE KINGDIN ARE MY ENEMIES. BUT I PREFER TO ALLY WITH THEM RATHER THAN TO SEE OGOTAI AND HIS CURSED PRIEST'S BLOODY TYRANNY CONTINUE.

THERE'S A NOBLE DECLARATION!

I'M NOT ALONE IN THINKING LIKE THIS, EITHER. NAZCA, THE BLACK GUARD CHIEF, HAS SPIES EVERYWHERE. EVEN THIS MORNING, FIVE OF OUR OWN PAID IN AN ATROCIOUS WAY FOR THEIR DESIRE TO FIND PEACE. ONE OF THEM WAS ONE OF MY OLDEST FRIENDS...

I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING, AS THERE'S ONLY A HANDFUL OF US. THE GREAT MASS OF MAHAXATL WARRIORS IS COMPLETELY FANATICISED BY OGOTAI. NOT TO MENTION THE TERROR THAT OUR PRIESTS AND THE BLACK GUARD INSPIRE.

BASICALLY, YOU'RE SCARED.

WHAT DID YOU DARE TO SAY?!

THAT UNDER YOUR ROCK-HARD EXTERIOR, YOU'RE AFRAID TO CONFRONT YOUR SUPPOSED GOD OPENLY. AND THAT'S ACTUALLY WHY WE'RE HERE.



YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, WOMAN. OGOTAI HAS SUPERHUMAN POWERS. HE CAN MAKE THINGS APPEAR AND DISAPPEAR. KILL FROM A DISTANCE, READ MINDS.



BAH, LEGENDS FOR COWARDS. YOUR GOD FROM THE SEA IS JUST A WASHED-UP CASTAWAY WHO'S MORE EVIL THAN YOU, THAT'S ALL.



I'VE SEEN HIM DO THESE THINGS. WE'VE ALL SEEN HIM. OGOTAI IS INVINCIBLE!

AND HE'S NOT JUST A SIMPLE CASTAWAY. HE TOLD US THAT HE FELL INTO THE SEA WHEN HE CAME FROM THE STARS ON BOARD HIS FLYING SHIP. AND WE BELIEVED HIM.

THE STARS?...



AS FOR OUR WEAPONS, THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE OF A BURDEN THAN USEFUL IN GETTING US HERE UNNOTICED.



INSTEAD OF TRYING TO DISCOURAGE US, WHY DON'T YOU EXPLAIN HOW TO GET INTO OGOTAI'S PALACE...

THAT WOULD BE DIFFICULT...

ACCESS IS GUARDED DAY AND NIGHT, AND EVEN THE PRIESTS DON'T DARE TO GO IN. THEY SAY THAT ITS CORRIDORS ARE A LABYRINTH LITTERED WITH MONSTROUS TRAPS THAT NOBODY, EXCEPT OGOTAI, HAS THE KEY TO.



WE HAVE TO FIND THIS KEY...

YES, THE STARS, WHERE THE GODS LIVE. IT'S TRUE, I'LL ADMIT IT: HE SCARES ME. AND YOU, TOO, YOU'LL BE SCARED WHEN THE MOMENT TO CONFRONT HIM ARISES.



THE PALACE SITS ON TOP OF THE GREAT PYRAMID, WHICH IS FORBIDDEN TO EVERYONE BUT THE PRIESTS AND THE BLACK GUARD. EVEN I CAN ONLY CLIMB THE STAIRS ON DAYS OF GREAT SACRIFICES.



GREAT SACRIFICES?

JUST LIKE WE'LL FIND A WAY OUT AFTER SNATCHING THAT FAMOUS HEADPIECE.



I ADMIRE YOUR OPTIMISM AND YOUR RECKLESSNESS. BUT THERE'S A DETAIL THAT IT'S TIME YOU BOTH KNEW ABOUT...

IF YOU MAKE IT THAT FAR, THERE ARE ONLY TWO OF YOU, AND APART FROM YOUR FISTS, YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE ANY WEAPONS.



FOR MORE SECURITY, WE'VE LEFT OUR COMPANIONS OUTSIDE THE TOWN.



ONCE PER MOON, HUNDREDS OF PRISONERS, SLAVES AND CONVICTS ARE STRUNG UP BY THE PRIESTS FOR OGOTAI'S HIGHEST GLORY. THE NEXT SACRIFICE WILL TAKE PLACE IN FOUR DAYS.

CHARMING CUSTOM. AND THE PALACE ITSELF?

YOU WEREN'T SENT HERE TO GET HOLD OF THAT HEADPIECE. YOUR REAL MISSION IS TO KILL OGOTAI!

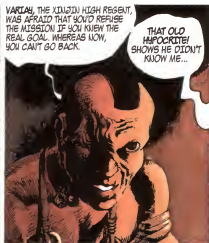




WHAT?!

WAIT
A SECOND...
THAT WASN'T
IN THE
CONTRACT.

IT WAS
ALWAYS THE
PLAN. YOU
JUST DIDN'T
KNOW IT.



VARTAI, THE XINGJIN HIGH REGENT,
WAS AFRAID THAT YOU'D REFUSE
THE MISSION IF YOU KNEW THE
REAL GOAL. WHEREAS NOW,
YOU CAN'T GO BACK.

THAT OLD
HYPOCRITE!
SHOWS HE DIDN'T
KNOW ME...



I'M INDIFFERENT TO
KILLING, BUT KILLING
A GOD... THAT COMES
WITH A PRICE.

YOU WILL BE
PAID BEYOND
YOUR WILDEST
DREAMS.



THE XINGJIN HAVE PROMISED A
FULL CHARIOT OF GOLD IF YOU
SUCCEED. I'LL ADD A SECOND!
IT WILL BE A SMALL PRICE TO
PAY FOR THE DELIVERANCE
OF MY PEOPLE.

AT LEAST
THAT'S A LANGUAGE
THAT I UNDERSTAND,
SCAR FACE.



BUT YOU'RE STILL A
LONG WAY FROM HAVING
EARNED THAT GOLD.
YOUR CHANCES OF
SUCCESS ARE VERY
SLENDER.

THAT'LL
BE OUR
BUSINESS.

YOURS
PERHAPS, BUT
NOT MINE...



I DON'T FEEL LIKE I HAVE
THE SAME BOUNTY-HUNTER
SOUL AS YOU, AND
BESIDES, I'VE HAD
ENOUGH OF THIS TALE.
YOU'VE DRAGGED
ME THROUGH, I'M
PULLING OUT OF
THE GAME.

??



THAT'S A SUDDEN CHANGE
OF HEART, STRANGER.
WEREN'T YOU READY
TO CUT MY THROAT
JUST NOW WHEN I
CAME IN?

I MAY
KILL TO DEFEND
MY LIFE, IT'S TRUE.
I REFUSE TO BE
AN ACCOMPLICE
IN WHAT I'D CALL
AN ASSASSI-
NATION.

MAN OR GOD, OGOTAI IS
A DANGEROUS MONSTER.
BLOODTHIRSTY MANIAC.
BY GETTING RID OF HIM,
YOU'LL SAVE A WHOLE
COUNTRY FROM
DESTRUCTION.

SORRY, HOG, BUT
MY DECISION HAS
BEEN MADE...

FIGURE IT OUT
WITHOUT ME.
FAREWELL.

HAVEN'T YOU
FORGOTTEN
SOMETHING,
DEAR
THORGALP?

I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN
ANYTHING, VIPER.
I UNDERSTOOD LONG
AGO THAT SOLAN AND
TREE FOOT COULD
ONLY HAVE BEEN WITH
THE KING. AND I
CAN MAKE DO
WITHOUT YOU TO
FIND THEM.

YOU... YOU'LL PAY FOR
THIS, I SWEAR!

BE CAREFUL,
STRANGER. IF YOU
REFUSE TO BE MY
ALLY, YOU WON'T
LEAVE MAHAXATL
ALIVE.

WE'LL
SEE ABOUT
THAT...



STOP THAT MAN! HE'S ONE OF
THE FOREIGN DEMONS SENT BY
THE XINJIN!





HE KNOWS TOO MUCH; WE HAVE TO CATCH HIM AT ANY COST. IF HE WAS EVER ARRESTED BY THE BLACK GUARD, IT WOULD BE A CATASTROPHE!







I COULDN'T SLEEP ALL NIGHT. WHY ARE THEY NOT BACK YET, TJALL? I'M SURE SOMETHING BAD'S HAPPENED TO THEM...

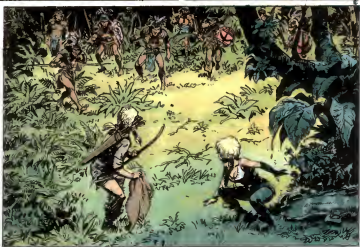


I'M SCARED, TJALL. I WANT THORGAL TO BE BACK. TO LEAVE THIS AWFUL COUNTRY, FIND SOLAN AND YOUR UNCLE AND FINALLY GO HOME. I WANT TO BE ABLE TO FORGET THIS FEELING OF AUGHISH....



I'D LIKE TO BE ABLE TO FORGET TOO, AAKICIA. TO FORGET THAT I BETRAYED YOU. THAT I LOST YOUR TRUST AND FRIENDSHIP FOREVER.* BUT, THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT ARE JUST IMPOSSIBLE TO...

TJALL!...



* SEE THE EYES OF TANATLOC.







YOUR MEN
ARE USELESS,
COMMANDER
HOG!



I GIVE YOU
EVERYTHING YOU
NEED TO ARREST
THEM WITHOUT RISK,
AND YOU LET THAT
KID GO... MY
COMPLIMENTS!



CAIMAN SWARM AROUND
THAT PART OF THE RIVER.
EVEN IF HE ESCAPES OUR
ARROWS, THE BLOND MAN
HAS NO CHANCE.



BUT I'M TRYING TO
UNDERSTAND, KRISS
OF VALUOR... THOSE
MEN AND THAT
WOMAN, WEREN'T
THEY YOUR
FRIENDS?

LET'S JUST SAY
THAT I DON'T LIKE
IT WHEN MY FRIENDS
ABANDON ME, AND THAT
I HAVE AN OLD SCORE TO
SETTLE WITH THEM. STILL,
I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO
SEE THAT TRAITOR GO
DIE BEFORE MY EYES.



WHAT DOES IT MATTER.
I SUPPOSE THAT
THORSAL AND AARICIA
WILL BE EXECUTED
AT THE NEXT
SACRIFICE?

WITHOUT A
DOUBT, THEY'LL
EVEN BE THE
HIGHLIGHT OF
THE SHOW.



THAT'S WHAT I WAS HOPING.
THAT WAY, NEITHER THE
PRIESTS NOR THE BLACK
GUARD WILL PAY ANY ATTEN-
TION TO ME WHEN I STEP
INTO THE HOLY PALACE.

WHEN YOU?..
BUT HOW DO YOU
THINK YOU'LL DO
THAT?



I'LL TELL YOU IN
GOOD TIME, NOW
LEAVE ME. I NEED
TO REGAIN MY
STRENGTH.



KRISS...



I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE INSANELY
BRAVE OR COMPLETELY RECKLESS,
BUT... I WANTED TO TELL YOU...
I'VE NEVER MET A WOMAN
LIKE YOU...

HANDS OFF, SCAR FACE! I'VE MET MORE MEN LIKE YOU THAN I CAN COUNT: VALIANT AND CHARMING, BUT ONLY IN WORDS...



GET OUT, YOU ONE-EYED SLEAZE! GET YOUR RAVAGED FACE OUT OF MY SIGHT! GET OUT!



BUT AS SOON AS IT'S TIME FOR ACTION, IT'S A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CASE. AT LEAST THORGAL DOES WHAT HE SAYS...

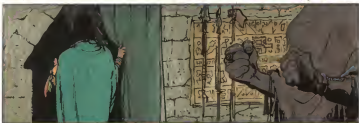


THORGAL?!

SO THAT'S THE EXPLANATION... THIS THORGAL, WHOM YOU PRETEND TO HATE AND WHOM YOU'RE SACRIFICING AS YOUR PLAN REQUIRES. IN REALITY, YOU ADMIRE HIM AND YOU'VE...



ENOUGH!



YOU WILL FORGET WHAT YOU JUST SAW, THORGAL. I WANT TO REMOVE ALL TRACES OF YOUR ORIGINS FROM YOUR MEMORY.



I HAVE TO CONCENTRATE MORE... TO TEAR DOWN THIS VEIL BETWEEN ME AND MY MEMORIES... I HAVE TO... I KNOW I HAVE TO...



XARGOS! HIS NAME WAS XARGOS! I'M SURE OF IT! I WAS... I WAS 12 YEARS OLD, I THINK...

I WENT TO FIND HIM TO DISCOVER WHERE I WAS FROM... HE GAVE ME A MAGIC BOX...

LOOK AT THE STARS, THORGAL, THEY'LL TEACH YOU WHERE YOU CAME FROM.

THE STARS!?!
THAT'S WHERE I SAW THAT TRIDENT FOR THE FIRST TIME: AMONG THE STARS!

WE'VE ARRIVED IN SIGHT OF THE EARTH, MY FRIENDS... THE CRADLE OF OUR FIRST ORIGINS!

THANKS TO THE THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF TECHNOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOSENSORY ADVANCE WE HAVE, WE CAN RECLAIM IT BY PRETENDING THAT WE'RE GODS!

GOOS!... THE TRIDENT... THE FLYING SHIPS... COULD OGOTAI REALLY BE?...



* SEE CHILD OF THE STARS.



WHAT'S THIS...?

THIS IS A GREAT DAY FOR YOU, STRANGER. YOUR IMPURE BLOOD WILL RUN FOR THE IMMORTAL GLORY OF OGOTAI.



OGOTAI! I HAVE TO SEE HIM! IT'S VERY IMPORTANT!

DON'T WORRY, YOU'LL SEE HIM. IN THE OTHER WORLD, WHERE HE AWAITS YOU.



I HAVE TO EXPLAIN SOMETHING TO HIM... HIM AND I, WE'RE...



YOU'D BE BETTER OFF THANKING ME FOR NOT HAVING TORTURED YOU. COME, ENOUGH WASTED TIME. THE PRIESTS AWAIT US.



219







STOP TREMBLING, HOG.
WITH THIS HELMET AND
PAINT, NOBODY WILL
RECOGNIZE ME.





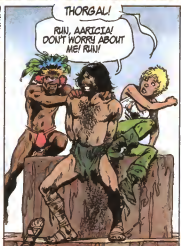
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? CATCH THAT DEMON, YOU MAGGOTS! AND I WANT HIM ALIVE, YOU HEAR ME? ALIVE!



THORGAL! WAIT, I'LL RELEASE YOU...

LATER, MY LOVE, RUN AND TRY TO GET IN THE PALACE. THEY WON'T DARE TO FOLLOW YOU IN.

BUT...



THORGAL! RUN, AARICIA! DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! RUN!





KRISS OF VALNORI!

A STUPID REACTION, I'LL ADMIT, BUT NOW WE'RE EVEN, MY DEAR.*



THAT WOMAN! A FOREIGNER!... IT WAS YOU WHO...



HOG BETRAYED US! KILL HIM! KILL HIM!



OPEN THAT DOOR, QUICK!

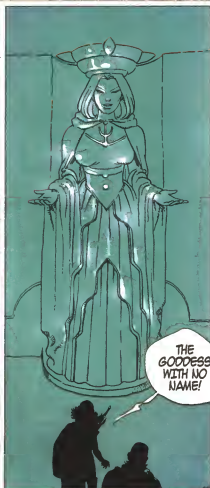
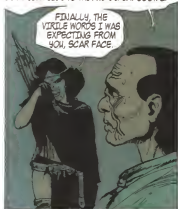


THORBALI...

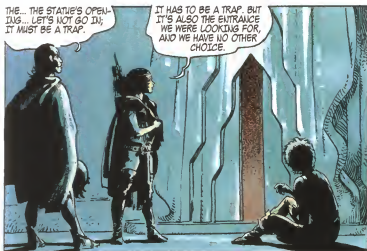
* SEE THE LAND OF GA.



BUT IN A WAY, I AM RELIEVED. I'M STILL AFRAID, BUT AT LEAST I'M NO LONGER A COWARD. SO I'LL BE AT YOUR SIDE TO TRY AND DEFEAT OGOTAI.



THE... THE STATUE'S OPEN-
ING... LET'S NOT GO IN;
IT MUST BE A TRAP.



IT HAS TO BE A TRAP. BUT
IT'S ALSO THE ENTRANCE
WE WERE LOOKING FOR,
AND WE HAVE NO OTHER
CHOICE.

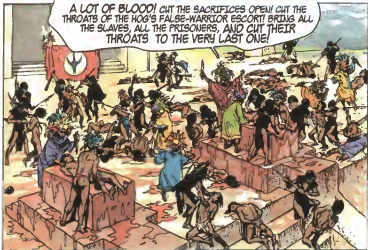
COME ON, GET UP, BEAUTIFUL!
AND DON'T THINK I SAVED
YOU OUT OF THE GOODNESS
OF MY HEART... SINCE
THERE ARE TRAPS
YOU'LL BE GOING
FIRST!



OGOTAI WILL SEE TO THE CRUEL
PUNISHMENTS OWED TO THOSE SACRI-
LEGIOUS FOOLS WHO HAVE DARED
TO DEFILE HIS SACRED RETREAT. HIS
ANGER WILL BE TERRIBLE, AND TO
APPEASE IT, THERE MUST BE BLOOD!



A LOT OF BLOOD! CUT THE SACRIFICES OPEN! CUT THE
THROATS OF THE HOG'S FALSE-WARRIOR ESCORT! BRING ALL
THE SLAVES, ALL THE PRISONERS, AND CUT THEIR
THROATS TO THE VERY LAST ONE!

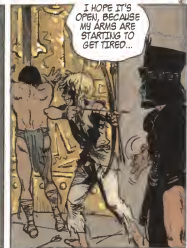


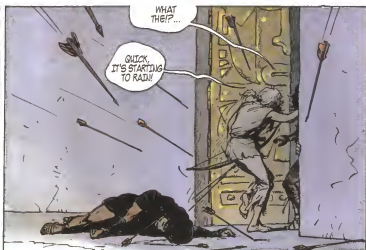
STARTING WITH THIS
FOREIGN DEMON, WHO
WILL PAY FOR HIS
ACCOMPLICES AND
WHOSE HEART I'LL
RIP OUT WITH MY
OWN HANDS.



DIE,
SCOUNDREL!
MAY YOUR
ENTRAILS
FOREVER ROT
IN THE...







* SEE THE EYES OF TANIATLOC.



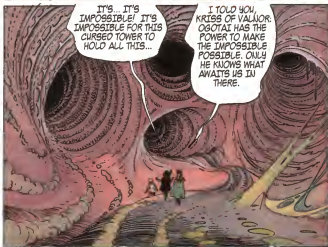
PHEW, FINAL-
LY... WHERE
THE DEVIL
ARE WE?



NOWHERE AND EVERY-
WHERE, SINCE WE
ENTERED THE
LABYRINTH, WE'RE
ELSEWHERE!



IT'S... IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE! IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE FOR THIS
CURSED TOWER TO
HOLD ALL THIS...



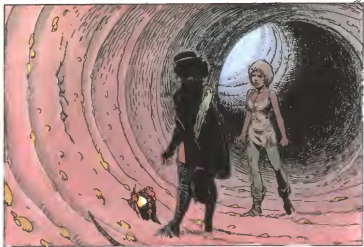
I TOLD YOU,
KRISS OF VALUOR:
OGOTAI HAS THE
POWER TO MAKE
THE IMPOSSIBLE
POSSIBLE. ONLY
HE KNOWS WHAT
AWAITS US IN
THERE.



WE'LL SEE. YOUR
OGOTAI SHOULD KNOW
THAT IT TAKES A LOT
MORE THAN THAT TO
SCARE ME.

SPEAK FOR
YOURSELF. NOT TO
MENTION THE HEAT
THAT'S GETTING
MORE AND MORE
INTENSE...

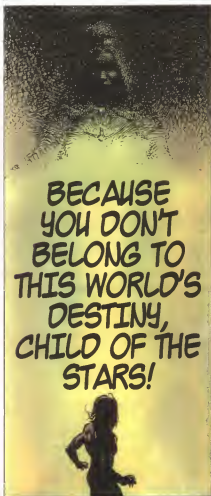








WHY MUST MY LIFE BE CONSTANTLY CROSSED
WITH SUFFERING AND DEATH, WHEN ALL I
WANT IS PEACE AND LOVE WITH THOSE WHO
ARE DEAR TO ME? ... WHY? ...

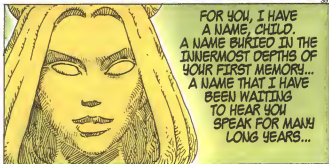
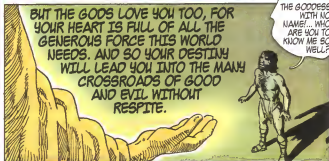


YOUR EXISTENCE ISN'T
WRITTEN IN THE LINES
TRACED THROUGH ALL
ETERNITY FOR MANKIND
ON EARTH. AND THE GODS
ARE IRRITATED, FOR
IT IS INADMISSIBLE
TO BE AND TO NOT
BE AT THE SAME
TIME.

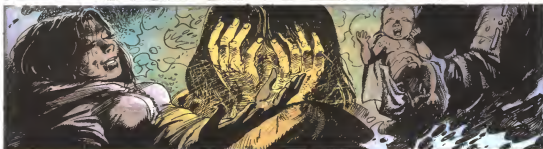


BUT THE GODS LOVE YOU TOO, FOR
YOUR HEART IS FULL OF ALL THE
GENEROUS FORCE THIS WORLD
NEEDS. AND SO YOUR DESTINY
WILL LEAD YOU INTO THE MANY
CROSSROADS OF GOOD
AND EVIL WITHOUT
RESPITE.

THE GODDESS
WITH NO
NAME! ... WHO
ARE YOU TO
KNOW ME SO
WELL?



FOR YOU, I HAVE
A NAME, CHILD.
A NAME BURIED IN THE
INNERMOST DEPTHS OF
YOUR FIRST MEMORY...
A NAME THAT I HAVE
BEEN WAITING
TO HEAR YOU
SPEAK FOR MANY
LONG YEARS...



YOU'RE A REMARKABLE YOUNG WOMAN, KRISS OF VALIAR, FEARLESS AND UNSCRIPULOUS, READY TO SACRIFICE ANYONE AND ANYTHING TO MEET YOUR ENDS... COMPLETELY REMARKABLE.



THAT'S WHAT GOT YOU HERE, FOR THAT MATTER. NOW, FOLLOW ME.



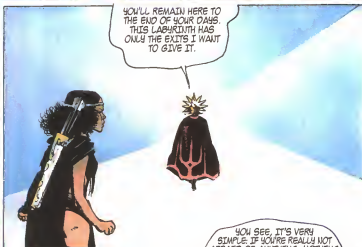
WHERE... WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?

TO YOUR REWARD OR YOUR PUNISHMENT; IT'S UP TO YOU.

AND IF I REFUSE?



YOU'LL REMAIN HERE TO THE END OF YOUR DAYS. THIS LABYRINTH HAS ONLY THE EXITS I WANT TO GIVE IT.



ITS TWISTS AND TURNS ONLY EXIST IN THE IMAGINATION OF THOSE WHO DARE VENTURE INTO IT. AND ITS TRAPS ARE BORN ONLY FROM THE FEAR OF MEETING THEM.

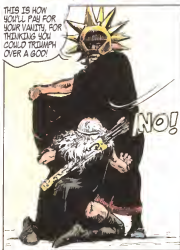
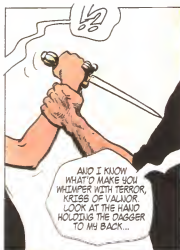


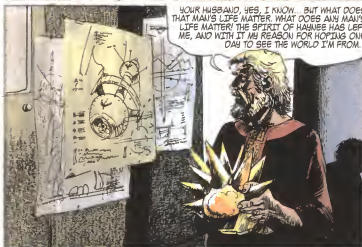
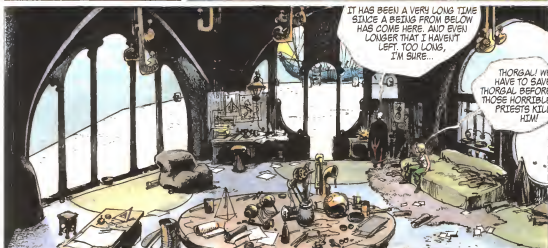
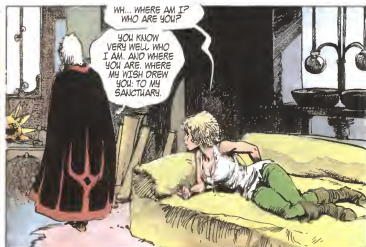
BUT THEIR EFFECTS ARE DEFINITELY REAL, REMEMBER.



YOU SEE, IT'S VERY SIMPLE. IF YOU'RE REALLY NOT AFRAID OF ANYTHING, NOTHING CAN HAPPEN TO YOU HERE. BUT THERE HAS TO BE A SECRET FEAR OF SOMETHING IN EVERY BEING.

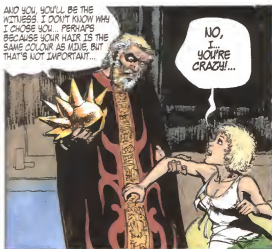




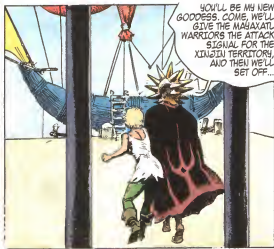


AND YOU, YOU'LL BE THE
WITNESS. I DON'T KNOW WHY
I CHOSE YOU... PERHAPS
BECAUSE YOUR HAIR IS THE
SAME COLOUR AS MINE, BUT
THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT...

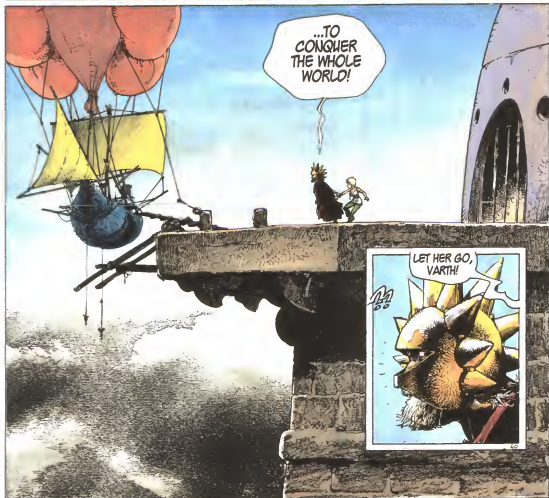
NO,
I...
YOU'RE
CRAZY!...



YOU'LL BE MY NEW
GODDESS. COME, WE'LL
GIVE THE MAYAXATL
WARRIORS THE ATTACK
SIGNAL FOR THE
XINJIN TERRITORY,
AND THEN WE'LL
SET OFF...



...TO
CONQUER
THE WHOLE
WORLD!



THORGAL!

THERE'LL BE NO MORE CONQUERING, VARTH. YOUR HIGH PRIEST... NAZCA. HOG... ALL YOUR WARRIOR CHIEFS ARE DEAD. IT'S OVER.

I HAVE WALKED A LONG PATH TO GET TO YOU, VARTH. A LOT LONGER THAN YOUR LABYRINTH... THE PATH OF A LIFETIME...

HOW DID YOU GET HERE? ... WITHOUT GOING THROUGH THE LABYRINTH? ...

I DON'T KNOW WHO TAUGHT YOU MY NAME... THE NAME THAT I'D EVEN FORGOTTEN MYSELF FOR A LONG TIME...

...BUT YOU WILL NEVER SPEAK IT AGAIN! DIE!

NO!

THE STRENGTH IN ME IS GREATER THAN YOUR POWERS, VARTH. I HAVE THE STRENGTH OF HAHNEE IN ME!

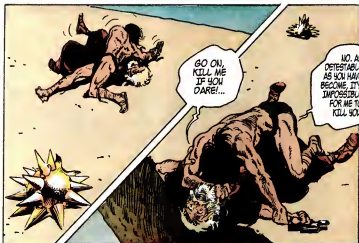
HAHNEE?!

HAHNEE'S MINE, CURSED DOG! MINE ALONE! AND IF MY POWERS DON'T WORK ON YOU...

I STILL HAVE THIS!...



THEN TOO
BAD FOR
YOU!



ENOUGH, VARTH!
THAT'S ENOUGH!
YOU'VE LOST!

!?



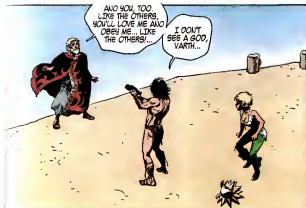
I RECOGNISE
THIS STRANGE
WEAPON...
YOU DISGUISED
XARGOS WITH THIS
IN THE
DUEL IN
THE STARS*

XARGOS!
IT WAS HE,
THEN!



IT WAS XARGOS WHO REVEALED MY
IDENTITY TO YOU! HE DIDN'T HAVE THE
RIGHT BUT NEVER MIND, XARGOS IS
FINALLY DEAD AND I'M THE LAST. THE
LAST, YOU HEAR
ME?... THE LAST
LIVING GOOD!

* SEE CHILD OF THE STARS



AND YOU, TOO, LIKE THE OTHERS, YOU'LL LOVE ME AND OBEY ME... LIKE THE OTHERS!...

I DON'T SEE A GOD, VARTH...

I JUST SEE AN OLD MAN WHO THINKS HE'S A GOD. AN OLD MAN WHOM GRIEF AND SOLITUDE HAVE TURNED MAD, AND WHO AVENGES HIS EXILE BY SOWING DEATH AND DESTRUCTION.



BUT THE WORST THING, VARTH, THE MOST TERRIBLE FOR ME, IS THAT THIS OLD MAN WITH RED HAIR COULD BE COVERED IN THE BLOOD OF A WHOLE PEOPLE IS MY FATHER.

??



I'M YOUR SON, VARTH. THE CHILD HANDED Brought INTO THE WORLD BEFORE Ours.



LIES!



ALL MY FAMILY ARE DEAD! DEAD! DEAD! DEAD!



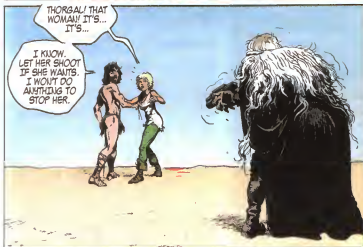
ALL DEAD ON THIS CURSED PLANET!



THORGAL... NOOOO!!!



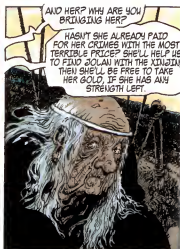






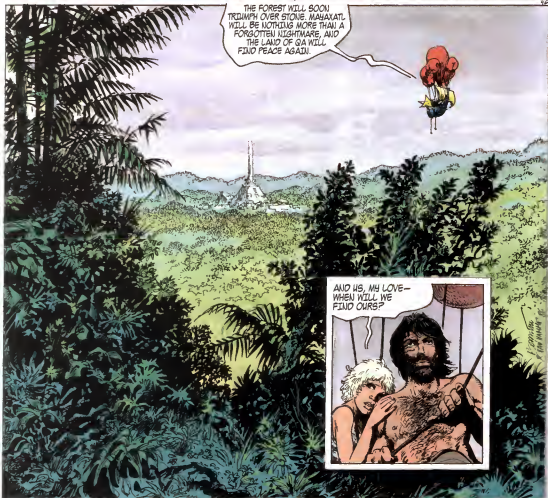
DO YOU THINK YOU
CAN CONTROL THIS
FLYING SHIP?

WITH BOTH
OF US, WE'LL MAKE
IT, AARICIA. IT'S THE
ONLY WAY WE HAVE
TO LEAVE THIS
PLACE.



AND HER? WHY ARE YOU
BRINGING HER?

HASN'T SHE ALREADY PAID
FOR HER CRIMES WITH THE MOST
TERRIBLE PRICE? SHE'LL HELP US
TO FIND JOLAN WITH THE KINGJIN;
THEN SHE'LL BE FREE TO TAKE
HER GOLD, IF SHE HAS ANY
STRENGTH LEFT.



THE FOREST WILL SOON
TRIUMPH OVER STONE. MAHAXATI
WILL BE NOTHING MORE THAN A
FORGOTTEN NIGHTMARE, AND
THE LAND OF GA WILL
FIND PEACE AGAIN!

AND US, MY LOVE—
WHEN WILL WE
FIND OURS?

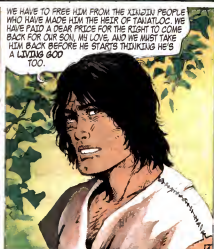
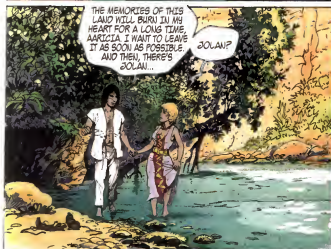
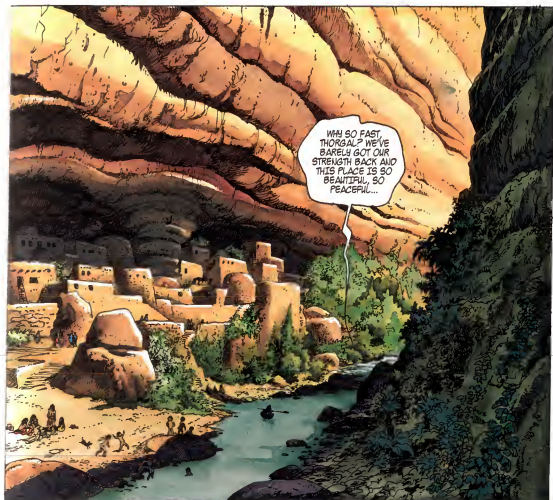




THORCAL

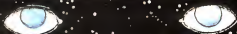
Between Earth and Sun

ROSINSKI - VAN HAMME





YOU MUST LEARN TO SEE, JOLAN, TO SEE!



TO SEE!



TO SEE TO SEE SEE SEE SEE





I'D ALSO LIKE TO GET BACK TO OUR ISLAND, AND TO SEE NORTHLAND TOO; THE LAND OF OUR YOUTH. BUT HOW WILL WE CROSS THE GREAT SEAP?

I DON'T KNOW...

PERHAPS ONE OF THOSE FLYING SHIPS COULD TAKE US IF THE KINGDOM LET US LEAVE...

I DID IT, THORGAL, I DID IT!

A DOUBLE CURVE BOW, JUST LIKE THEY HAVE IN THE FAR EAST. I'VE FINALLY MANAGED TO MAKE ONE IN YOUR SIZE WITH WOOD FROM HERE, BOTH SUPPLE AND VERY STRONG. I DON'T WANT TO SHOW OFF, BUT I THINK THAT THIS WILL BE MY ARMOURER'S MASTERPIECE.

IT'S RANGE SHOULD EXCEED AN ORDINARY BOW'S BY HALF. BUT I'M AFRAID YOU WILL NEED A LOT OF STRENGTH TO PULL IT.

IT LOOKS SUPERB, TREE FOOT. I CAN'T WAIT TO TRY IT.

THAT'S IT. GO AND PLAY WARRIOR. THEN, MEANWHILE, I'LL PLAY MY ROLE OF THE GOOD WIFE AND HELP TREE FOOT'S WOMEN PREPARE THE MEAL.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

THAT I FOUND OUT WHAT YOU AND AMRIGIA WERE TRYING TO HIDE FROM ME. THAT, BEFORE BEING KILLED WHILE SAVING YOUR LIFE, MY NEPHEW BETRAYED YOU BY ABANDONING YOU IN THE FOREST WHILE YOU WERE INJURED.

YOU KNOW, ABOUT TALL... I KNOW THE TRUTH.

SIMPLE QUESTION OF TALKING. YOU'LL SOON GET USED TO IT.

* SEE THE EYES OF TAKATLOC.

"RIGGS OF VALUOR! YOU
WENT TO SEE HER IN THAT
CAVE WHERE SHE CLUTCHES
HER GOLD LIKE A RAT
TO A CORPSE, AND SHE
TOLD YOU, IS THAT IT?"

I... I
WANTED
TO KNOW
WHAT REALLY
HAPPENED.

CURSED
WOMAN!

THWAG

EVEN REDUCED TO THE STATE OF
A HUNDRED-HEAR-OLD WOMAN,
UNABLE TO STAND, THAT WITCH
STILL MANAGES TO DO EVIL. IT
WOULD HAVE BEEN A THOUSAND
TIMES BETTER TO ABANDON
HER IN MAHAKAL.

EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED TO US IS HER
FAULT, TREE FOOT! EVERYTHING! INCLUDING
YOUR NEPHEW'S "BETRAHAL." TAJAL WAS JUST
A KID AND WENT ON TO PAY WELL, BEYOND
WHAT HE OWED FOR HIS MISTAKE.

IN
YOUR EYES,
PERHAPS. BUT
IN HIS?...

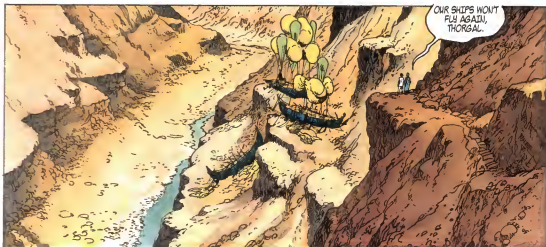
HE ADMIRED YOU SO MUCH,
THORSAL. COULD HE HAVE LIVED
WITH THAT... INJURY? IT WAS
CERTAINLY BETTER FOR HIM TO
DIE. BUT FOR ME... FOR ME...

I'M SORRY, BUT...
I'M SUDDENLY FEELING
SO OLD... SO
USELESS...

THE MEAL IS READY.
WE MUST CALL THE
MEN.

NOT
RIGHT NOW,
SPEH-EGG.

...LEAVE THEM
A FEW MOMENTS
TO REMEMBER A
FALLEN FRIEND.



OUR SHIP'S WON'T
FLY AGAIN, THORGAL.



NOT ENOUGH TO GET YOU
OVER THE GREAT WATER. IN
ANY CASE, ONLY TAUATLOOC
KNEW THE SECRET OF
THE MAGIC AIR THAT
LIFTED THEM INTO
THE SKIES.

NEVER
MIND. I'LL
BUILD A
BOAT.



A BOAT?
BUT THAT'S
IMPOSSIBLE!

WHY? DIDN'T
JOLAN AND TREE
FOOT ARRIVE IN
THE LAND OF QA
ON A BOAT? I'M
A TRAINED
SAILOR. I KNOW
HOW TO BUILD
THEM. IT'LL TAKE
AS LONG AS IT
NEEDS.



ALL I ASK IS THAT I CAN
TAKE A FEW OF YOUR MEN TO
THE COAST WITH TOOLS AND
A PLACE WHERE THERE ARE
TREES AND WATER. I'LL
TAKE CARE OF THE
REST. UNLESS...



...UNLESS YOU DON'T
WANT US TO LEAVE? OR
JOLAN TO LEAVE?

NO, NO,
THAT'S NOT
IT...

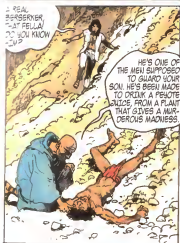


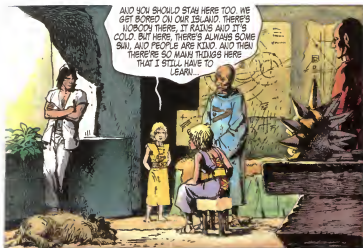
LOOK OUT!



* SEE THE LAND OF QA







AND YOU SHOULD STAY HERE TOO. WE GET BORED ON OUR ISLAND. THERE'S NOBODY THERE, IT RAINS AND IT'S COLD. BUT HERE, THERE'S ALWAYS SOME SUN, AND PEOPLE ARE KIND. AND THEN THERE'RE SO MANY THINGS HERE THAT I STILL HAVE TO LEARN.



AND THE KINJIN NEED ME. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, VARIAN?

YOU ARE FREE TO CHOOSE, ZOLAN.

BUT PEACE HAS BEEN RESTORED, THANKS TO YOUR PARENTS AND THEIR ALLIES. THE KINJIN MUST NOW LEARN TO BE SELF-SUPPORTING AGAIN, AND IT WILL CERTAINLY BE EASIER FOR US TO HONOUR YOUR MEMORY THAN TO SERVE YOUR PRESENCE.

BUT...

YOU HAVE TO STAY, HURIKAN!

YOU ARE NO LONGER ZOLAN BUT HURIKAN, THE HEIR OF TAVATLOC'S KNOWLEDGE AND OSGOTAT'S POWERS. YOUR DUTY IS TO FULFIL YOUR DESTINY AND TO MAKE THE KINJIN, WHO REVEALED IT TO YOU, A STRONG AND TRIUMPHANT NATION.



THAT WAY YOU CAN, IF YOU WANT, RULE OVER THE WHOLE LAND OF QIA AND BE THE MOST POWERFUL SOVEREIGN IN THE HISTORY OF MAN. YOU ARE HURIKAN, THE ONE WHO SEES! BETWEEN THE DARKNESS OF THE EARTH AND THE LIGHT OF THE SUN, YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO RECONSIDER!



YOU HEAR THAT, AARICIA? I HAVE TO STAY. I'LL HAVE A BIG PALACE BUILT FOR YOU WHERE YOU CAN FINALLY LIVE LIKE A PRINCESS.

I DON'T WANT A PALACE, MY DEAR. I JUST WANT A PLACE WHERE WE CAN LIVE IN PEACE, AND I'M AFRAID THAT THAT WILL BE DIFFICULT HERE.



ACTUALLY, IT HAS BECOME IMPOSSIBLE...

AND I'VE HEARD ENOUGH NONSENSE NOW. WE'RE LEAVING AS SOON AS I'VE BUILT A BOAT, AND THAT'S FINAL. ALL THREE OF US.



I'LL LEAVE IF I WANT TO. AND YOU, YOU'LL STAY IF I WANT YOU TO. I'M IN CHARGE HERE, NOT YOU!

REALLY?

YES, REALLY. I AM HURIKAN. AND LET ME REMIND YOU THAT WITHOUT ME, YOU'D BE DEAD. I SAVED YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU WERE SICK IN THE FOREST. WITH MY POWERS!

IT WAS I WHO INHERITED THE POWERS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE STARS AND NOT YOU. THAT PROVES THAT I'M WORTH MORE THAN YOU AND THAT YOU MUST OBEY ME.

OH, I HAVE A POWER.

OH, HEE? I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO KNOW WHICH ONE?

THIS ONE.

HEY!? WHAT ARE YOU...!?

OW! YOU... YOU CAN'T... OW! OW! I'LL...

OW! OWEE!

PAF
PAF
PAF

NO.

PAF
PAF
PAF

OUCH!
OW!
OUCH!

YOU'LL COME WITH US AND HELP WITH THE BOAT-BUILDING. WE'LL LEAVE TOMORROW MORNING. THAT GIVES YOU THE NIGHT TO CALM DOWN AND LEARN TO OBEY ME AGAIN!

I... I HATE YOU! I... I'LL HAVE YOU ARRESTED... THROWN IN A DUNGEON IN CHAINS... I'LL HAVE YOU WHIPPED...
I HATE YOU!



AND HERE ARE
THE GUARDS... GOOD
TIMING...

WHAT'S
GOING ON,
MALOC?

EXCUSE THIS INTERRUPTION,
LORD RESENT, BUT THE MAN
WHO TRIED TO KILL THORGAL
HAS SPOKEN!



HE THOUGHT HE WAS ACTING FOR THE
GOOD OF THE XILSIDI PEOPLE... TO STOP
HURUKAN FROM LEAVING THE LAND OF
QA... AND SOMEONE DRUGGED HIM WITH
PEYOTE TO GIVE HIM THE COURAGE
TO CONFRONT THE FOREIGNER...

WHO
IS THIS
"SOMEONE,"
MALOC?



WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE
UNFORTUNATE SOUL WHO
ORDERED SUCH A CRIME? IT
IS THE MOST ABOMINABLE
OF CRIMES. THORGAL IS
NOT ONLY OUR GUEST AND
HURUKAN'S FATHER. HE'S
THE ONE TO WHOM THE
XILSIDI OWE THEIR
PEACE.



IT'S THAT...
IT'S DIFFICULT
TO BELIEVE...

SPEAK WITHOUT FEAR,
MALOC. FOR ONCE, I
AGREE WITH WEBAC.
WHOEVER PLANNED
THIS SCHEME WILL
BE SEVERELY
FINISHED SO,
WHOP?



YOU,
LORD
VARIAY.



AND ZOLAN
HAD HIM
ARRESTED?

ON THE
SPOT!



THAT WOULD SURPRISE ME. OTHERWISE, HE WAS HIDING HIS GAME WELL.

IT WAS PROBABLY A PLOT SET UP FROM START TO FINISH BY THE DITZINGHUS JEBAC, WITH JOLAN'S INVOLUNTARY COMPLICITY, BEING MANIPULATED LIKE THE BOY HE IS.



BUT TO WHAT END?

TO TAKE POWER, OF COURSE. AS ALWAYS, WHICH MEANS THAT WE CAN'T WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW, TREE FOOT. WE HAVE TO LEAVE HERE TONIGHT. ALL THREE OF US, PLUS JOLAN.

OH.



BUT WHAT WILL WE DO WHEN WE GET TO THE COAST?

WE'LL SEE. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE JEBAC TRIES TO GET RID OF US AGAIN. AS FOR JOLAN...



I'LL GO GET HIM AS SOON AS WE'RE READY. AND I WOULDN'T ADVISE ANYONE TO TRY AND STOP ME.

SPEW... EGG? ... EAT?



AND VARIAN?

LET THE KINJIN FIGURE THAT OUT AMONG THEMSELVES, MY LOVE. WE OWE THEM NOTHING OTHER THAN SUFFERING AND TEARS.

COME BACK, MY TURTLEDOVES. LET ME EXPLAIN...



DON'T... AOW!



BY ODIN!
TREE FOOT!... QUICK,
AARICIA, GO
TO...



TOO LATE, THORGAL!
PUT DOWN THE BOW AND
FACE THE WALL, BOTH
OF YOU.



AS YOUR ORDERS ARE TO KILL
US, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR,
MALOC? IS IT SHOOTING US IN
THE BACK THAT BOTHERS YOU?



MY ORDERS ARE
SIMPLY TO ARREST YOU,
YOUR WIFE AND TREE
FOOT.

NO POINT
ASKING YOU
WHO GAVE
YOU THEM...

HIRUKAN,
OF
COURSE.



DID YOU FORGET THAT YOU GRAVELY OFFENDED
HIM IN PUBLIC? THE GODS HOLD BRIDGES,
THORGAL, ESPECIALLY AGAINST THOSE WHO TRY
TO MAKE THEM SUBMIT TO AN UNACCEPTABLE
AUTHORITY.

WELL, WELL...
GOOD OLD WEBAC
DRESSED AS THE
HIGH REGENT. MY
COMPLIMENTS. YOU
DIDN'T WASTE ANY
TIME.



THE LORD HIRUKAN HONoured ME WITH
HIS FRIENDSHIP AND TRUST, WHICH IS
NO LONGER YOUR CASE, I'M AFRAID.
HE ALSO CONDEMNED YOU TO JOIN
THE TRAITOR VARTAK IN THE
SUN'S MOUTH!

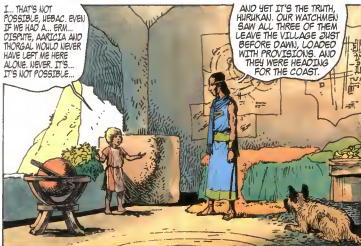
THE SUN'S
MOUTH?
WHAT'S THAT?



YOU'LL SOON FIND OUT!
HAHAHAHA!



I... THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE, HEBAC. EVEN IF WE HAD A... ERM... DISPUTE, AARICIA AND THORGAL WOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT ME HERE ALONE. NEVER. IT'S... IT'S NOT POSSIBLE...



SEE FOR YOURSELF. THEY'VE TAKEN EVERYTHING--THEIR WEAPONS, THEIR CLOTHES, THEIR FOOD RESERVES, EVERYTHING.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND... THORGAL SAID THAT...



BUT I DON'T WANT THEM TO DO...



I DON'T WANT IT... I DON'T WANT IT...

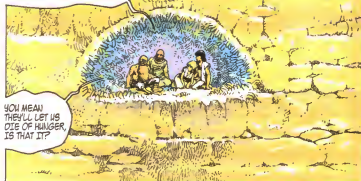


TAKE LORD HIRUKAN HOME. AND MAKE SURE THAT HE DOESN'T GO OUT WITHOUT MY AUTHORISATION.



THE SUN'S MOUTH!

THIS IS WHERE THE XIJUDJI ABANDON THEIR CONDEMNED. THEY'RE HOISTED UP HERE BY TALL LADDERS AFTER HAVING BEEN KNOCKED OUT; THEN THE LADDERS ARE TAKEN AWAY.



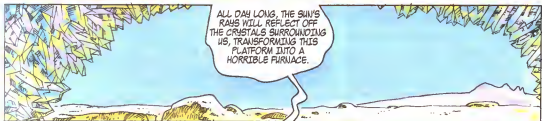
YOU MEAN THEY'LL LET US DIE OF HUNGER, IS THAT IT?



OH, WE'LL BE DEAD WELL BEFORE WE'RE RACKED WITH HUNGER, TREE FOOT. LOOK AHEAD OF YOU...



DESERT!
AS FAR AS THE EYE
CAN SEE! SOUTH
FACING!



ALL DAY LONG, THE SUN'S RAYS WILL REFLECT OFF THE CRYSTALS SURROUNDING US, TRANSFORMING THIS PLATFORM INTO A HORRIBLE FURNACE.



THE HEAT WILL SLOWLY RISE UNTIL IT'S UNBEARABLE, DRAWING ALL WATER FROM OUR BODIES, AND THE DAZZLING LIGHT WILL BLIND US.



OUR SKIN WILL BURN AND OUR BLOOD WILL BOIL; THEN OUR BRAINS WILL START TO MELT AND WE'LL GO MAD.



THEN, WE'LL DO AS EVERYONE BEFORE US HAS DONE HERE: TO END OUR SUFFERING, WE'LL THROW OURSELVES INTO THE PIT.



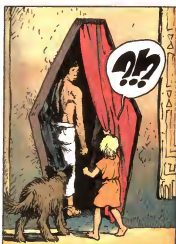
I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT, MUFF. SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED. EVEN IF MY PARENTS WERE ANGRY, TREE FOOT WOULDN'T HAVE LEFT WITHOUT SAYING GOODBYE...



SPEHL-EGG AND EAT, TREE FOOT'S WOMEN! THEY MUST KNOW...



COME ON, LET'S TRY TO FIND THEM.



!!



GET OUT OF THE WAY! I WANT TO LEAVE!

FORGIVE US, LORD, BUT LORD WEBAC HAS FORBIDDEN US FROM LETTING YOU LEAVE THIS ROOM WHILE HE'S AWAY.

FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY.



WE'LL STAKE OUR LIVES ON IT.

??



WEBAC'S TREATING ME LIKE A BABY, YOU KNOW! LIKE A BABY! ME, HURUKAN!



AAGH, I'LL TEACH HIM! RAAAAH...



!!!



A SECRET PASSAGE!
COME ON, MUFF, LET'S
GO! THERE MUST BE AN
EXIT SOMEWHERE. WE'LL
OUTSMART UEBAC.



HE'S JUST A
KID, MALOC. I'VE
BEEN COAXING
HIM AND TAKING
CARE OF HIM
FOR WEEKS.



AS SOON AS HE GETS USED TO THE IDEA
THAT HIS PARENTS HAVE ABANDONED
HIM, HE'LL NATURALLY SWITCH HIS NEED
FOR TRUST AND AFFECTION TO ME. NOW
THAT VARIAN IS ELIMINATED, THANKS
TO YOU, I CAN DO WHAT I WANT. AND
THE KINGDOM WILL BE FORCED TO
BOW BEFORE THE DECISIONS
OF LORD HURUKAN.

SO WE CAN MARCH ON
MAHAXATI, BRING THE
CHAAAM AND THE OTHER
TRIBES UNDER THE SOLE
AUTHORITY OF HURUKAN,
DOUBLE HEIR OF TANATLOC
AND OSOTAL, AND DOMINATE
THE WHOLE LAND OF GA.
I, UEBAC, WILL BE THE
GRAND MASTER AND YOU,
MALOC, SOUL COMMAND
ALL THE WEAPONS!



HMMM...
AN AMBITIOUS
PLAN, BUT AREN'T
YOU AFRAID OF
THORGAL...?



HE'S NOT AN
ORDINARY MAN.
I'D FEEL A LOT
MORE AT EASE
IF WE KILLED
-IN STRAIGHT
-WAY.

AND RISK SOLAH
FINDING OUT? COME
ON, MALOC, HAVE YOU
EVER SEEN ANYONE
SURVIVE IN THE SUN'S
MOUTH...?



VARIAN AND THE
THREE FOREIGNERS
WILL BE DEAD BEFORE
TOMORROW EVENING,
AND IN A FEW DAYS,
THE VULTURES WILL
HAVE LEFT NOTHING OF
THEM BUT ANONYMOUS
SKELETONS, WHOSE
BONES WE'LL SPREAD
THROUGH THE
DESERT.



YES,
BUT...

SILENCE!
DID YOU HEAR
SOMETHING?



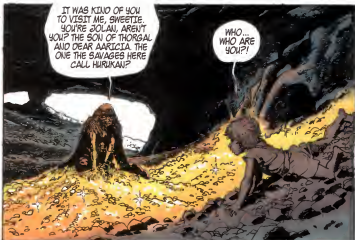


WHAT, DON'T YOU RECOGNISE ME? YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ME BEFORE, THAT'S TRUE. AND I HAVEN'T HAD THE HONOUR OF BEING RECEIVED IN YOUR "PALACE."

KRISS OF VALVORI!...
BUT HOW?...



NO! DON'T TOUCH ME!



IT WAS KIND OF YOU TO VISIT ME, SWEETIE. YOU'RE JOLAN, AREN'T YOU? THE SON OF THORGAL AND DEAR AARICIA. THE ONE THE SAVAGES HERE CALL HURUKAN?

WHO... WHO ARE YOU?!



WHY ARE YOU AFRAID OF ME, JOLAN? WASN'T IT THANKS TO ME THAT YOU BECAME A LIVING GOD FOR THE KINGDOM? DIDN'T I BRING YOU OGOAT'S MAGIC HEADPIECE AFTER COMPLETING MY PERILOUS MISSION? AND, AS THANKS, I'M LEFT TO ROT HERE LIKE A DOG...



"WHAT ARE YOU COMPLAINING ABOUT?" SAID THAT VULTURE VARTAN. "YOU WANTED GOLD FOR YOUR MISSION? A LOT OF GOLD? HELP YOURSELF—THIS MINE'S FULL OF IT..."

GOLD, JOLAN! THOUSANDS OF POUNDS OF RAW GOLD! AND ALL THIS GOLD IS MINE! MINE, ALL MINE!



BUT WHAT'S THE POINT IN HAVING ALL THAT GOLD IF YOU'RE TOO OLD TO CARRY IT?



TOO OLD...



BUT I'M 20 YEARS OLD.
JOLAN, OGOTAI'S CURSED
MAGIC GAVE MY BODY THE
RAVAGES OF OLD AGE,
BUT I'M ONLY 20
YEARS OLD.



TWENTY YEARS OLD,
YOU HEAR ME?
I'M NOT OLD,
I'M 20 YEARS OLD!
TWENTY!
TWENTY!



SHHH...
BE QUIET!



WHAT IS IT?
WHAT ARE YOU
AFRAID OF?

WEBAC AND
THE ARMY CHIEF,
MALOC... THEY...
THEY WANT TO
CATCH ME...



I HEARD THAT THEY'D LOCKED
THORGAL, AARICIA AND TREE
FOOT IN A PLACE THEY CALL
THE "SUN'S MOUTH," WHERE
THEY'LL DIE. I DON'T KNOW
WHERE IT IS, BUT... THEY
HAVE TO BE SET FREE.

HEE HEE
HEEE...



SO OUR TURTLEDOVES
HAVE BEEN TRAPPED TOO,
HEE HEE... BUT I DON'T
REALLY SEE HOW I
COULD HELP YOU,
SWEETIE. I CAN'T
EVEN STAND UP
ON MY OWN.
UNLESS...

UNLESS?
...



YOU'RE FROM THE SAME RACE
AS OGOTAI... AND I'VE HEARD
OF YOUR POWERS. DIDN'T YOU
MANAGE TO HEAL THORGAL
FROM A DISTANCE WHEN HE
WAS SICK AND INJURED
IN THE FOREST?



THAT'S TRUE, BUT...
TANATLOC WAS
GUIDING ME...
SINCE HIS DEATH,
I... I CAN'T USE
THE ENERGY IN
ME ANYMORE...

PERHAPS YOU
NEED SOMETHING
TO HELP YOU?



THIS,
FOR
EXAMPLE!

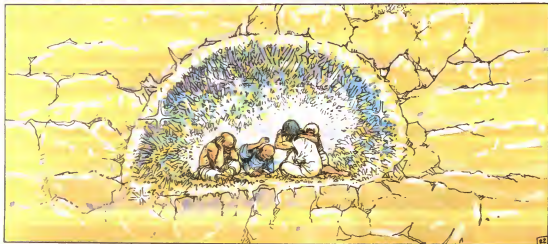
SEE THE EYES OF TANATLOC.

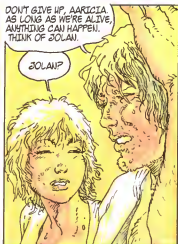
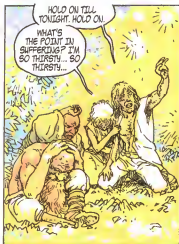
WHAT'S THAT?
LOOKS LIKE
SOME KIND OF
CROWN.

I DON'T KNOW. I
FOUND IT INSIDE
OGOTAI'S HEAD-
PIECE... I KEPT IT...
HMMM... JUST IN
CASE.

I GIVE IT TO YOU,
JOLAN. FOR YOU
ALONE CAN USE IT
TO... TO GIVE ME
BACK MY BODY...
MY YOUTH...

WITH THE HELP OF A WAVE AMPLIFIER
HIDDEN UNDER A SUPPOSEDLY MAGIC
HEADPIECE, OGOTAI RULED OVER
THE CHAAM, WHO IDOLISED
HIM LIKE A GOD.

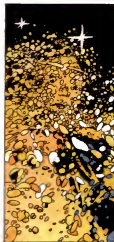




THE SECRET OF KNOWLEDGE, JOLAN, IS THAT EVERYTHING AROUND US IS IN THE IMAGE OF THE UNIVERSE. EVERY BEING, EVERY THING IS SEEMINGLY COMPOSED OF MILLIONS OF STARS, INVISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE AND LINKED TO EACH OTHER BY ENORMOUS FORCES THROUGH IMMENSE VOIDS.

LATER, JOLAN, YOU'LL LEARN TO SEE THE STARS. YOU'LL UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE ALL THE SAME AND THAT IT'S THE DIFFERENT WAYS THEY ARE ASSEMBLED THAT GIVES THINGS AND BEINGS DIFFERENT NATURES AND SHAPES.

YOU'LL LEARN TO FEEL AND TO MASTER THE ENERGY CURRENTS THAT ARE WITHIN YOU AND THAT YOU HAVE INHERITED FROM THE WORLD WHERE YOU CAME FROM. THIS ENERGY IS LARGER THAN THE FORCE LINKING THE STARS AND THINGS TOGETHER. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TRANSFORM THE VERY NATURE OF ALL MATERIAL AT WILL!





IT'S AMAZING, ZOLAN!
I HAD STOPPED DARING
TO HOPE FOR THIS. AND
YOU ARE DEFINITELY
THE GREATEST
MAGICIAN! I'VE...



ZOLAN?



POOR KID. WHAT AN
AMAZING EXPENDITURE OF
ENERGY HE MUST HAVE GONE
THROUGH TO ACHIEVE WHAT
HE DID. BUT FIRST, LET'S
HIDE THIS...

THERE
HE IS!



BUT... WHO'S THAT
WOMAN?

I CAN HARDLY
BELIEVE IT...
COULD IT BE?...

KRESS OF VALUOR, NOT AT
YOUR SERVICE, MY FRIENDS!
AND WHO HAS NO INTENTION
WHATSOEVER OF GETTING IN THE
WAY OF YOUR PLANS. ALL THAT I ASK
OF THE NEW KIDJIN MASTER IS FIVE
DAYS OF SUPPLIES AND THE TWO
CHARLOTS THE KIDJIN PROMISED
ME, TO TAKE MY GOLD FAR
AWAY FROM HERE.



COULD... COULD THE
CHILD HAVE DONE?...
BUT THEN, HE REALLY
DOES HAVE THE POWERS
OF A GOOP!

YOU WEREN'T
SURE BEFORE?
BUT THAT ISN'T
THE PROBLEM
RIGHT NOW.



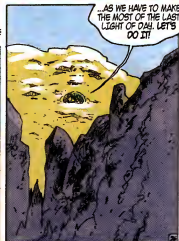
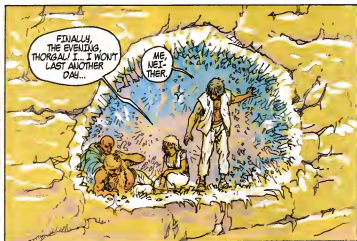
I FIND YOU VERY
ARROGANT, WOMAN!
I HAVE OTHER PLANS
FOR THIS GOLD, YOU
KNOW. ARREST HER,
MALOC!

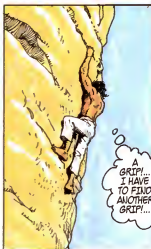
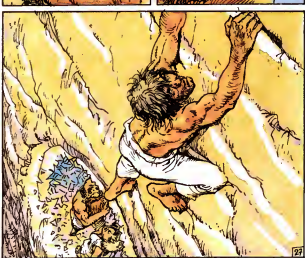
I SEE THAT
YOU'RE AS
DIRTY A PLAYER
AS I AM,
WEBAC. TOO
BAD FOR
YOU...

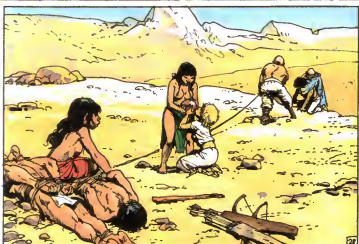
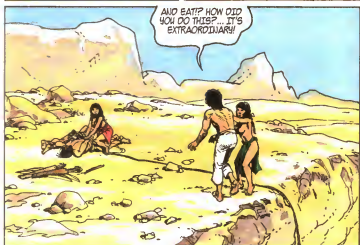
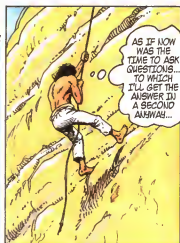


...AS I HAVE A TRUMP
CARD IN MY
GAME!

OUCH!
WHAT
THE?...









IT'S
INCREDIBLE!
ACCORDING TO
SPEHL-EGG AND
EAT, KRISS OF
VALUOR LEFT
THE VILLAGE
YESTERDAY AT
NOON, WITH
SOLAN.

BUT
HOW COULD
SHEP...

SHE'S YOUNG AGAIN. WE DON'T KNOW HOW.
AND SHE TOOK SOLAN AS A HOSTAGE TO GET
SUPPLIES AND TWO CHARIOTS, ON WHICH
SHE LOADED HER GOLD. SHE LEFT IN THE
DIRECTION OF THE COAST. OF COURSE,
JESAC HAD HER FOLLOWED AT A
DISTANCE TO TAKE BACK
SOLAN AT THE FIRST
OPPORTUNITY.



SO WE DON'T HAVE AN
HOUR TO LOSE, TREE
FOOT. WE HAVE TO
CATCH HER AND GET
SOLAN BACK BEFORE
THE XINJIN DO.

HOW? ON FOOT
IN THE DESERT?
WITH NO GUIDE, WE
HAVE NO CHANCE.
I'VE ALREADY
TRIED.



AND THEN,
AARICIA
COULDN'T
FOLLOW
US.

SHE'LL
STAY HERE WITH
VARIAH. YOUR
WOMEN WILL
HAVE TO FIND A
PLACE TO HIDE
THEM UNTIL WE
GET BACK.



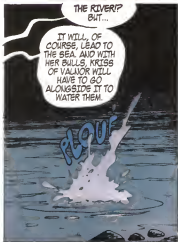
ALL RIGHT. AND WE HAVE THE
WEAPONS FROM THE TWO GUARDS
BUT ALL THAT DOESN'T TELL
US HOW WE'LL...

THE HOW IS IN
FRONT OF YOU,
TREE FOOT.



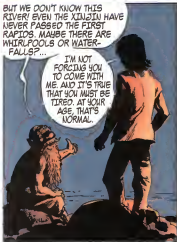
THE RIVER?
BUT...

IT WILL, OF
COURSE, LEAD TO
THE SEA. AND WITH
HER BULLS, KRISS
OF VALUOR WILL
HAVE TO GO
ALONGSIDE IT TO
WATER THEM.



BUT WE DON'T KNOW THIS
RIVER! EVEN THE XINJIN HAVE
NEVER PASSED THE FIRST
RAPIDS. MAYBE THERE ARE
WHIRLPOOLS OR WATER-
FALLS?...

I'M NOT
FORCING YOU TO
COME WITH
ME. AND IT'S TRUE
THAT YOU MUST BE
TIRED. AT YOUR
AGE, THAT'S
NORMAL.



TIRED? ME? I
WHAT ARE YOU
THINKING,
TENDERFOOT?
WHEN DO WE
LEAVE?

THE XINJIN WON'T COME OUT
TO LOOK FOR US BEFORE DAWN,
WHICH GIVES YOU TIME TO REST
A LITTLE AND ME TIME TO GO
AND STEAL A BOAT FROM THE
VILLAGE. WE HAVE TO BE FAR
AWAY FROM HERE WHEN
THE DAY BREAKS.





YOU PROMISED TO SET THORGAL, AARICIA AND TREE FOOT FREE. NOW, BECAUSE OF YOU THEY'LL DIE.

BE QUIET OR I'LL GAG YOU.



REMEMBER THAT IT'S YOUR FAULT YOUR PARENTS ARE WHERE THEY ARE. SO I DON'T SEE WHY I SHOULD RISK MY LIFE TO GET THEM OUT OF THERE.

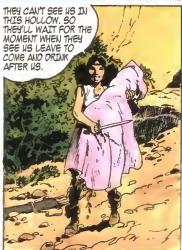
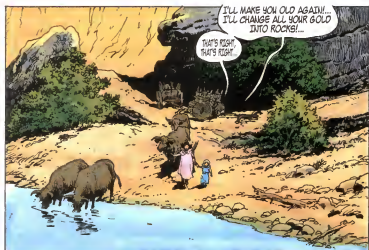


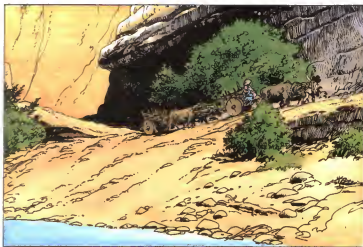
BECAUSE... SNIFF... BECAUSE YOU PROMISED ME...

WELL, YOU WERE WRONG TO BELIEVE ME. ANYWAY, I DON'T HAVE THE CHOICE. YOUR BEST FRIEND WEBAC WOULDN'T HAVE EVER LET THORGAL GO, EVEN IF IT COST YOUR LIFE, MY LITTLE HURIKAN.

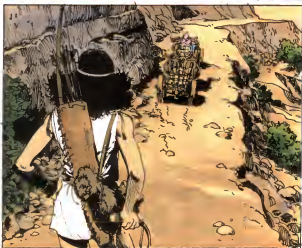


I HATE YOU... I HATE YOU...





SORRY I HAD TO TIE YOU UP, BUT WITH YOUR NAUGHTY WAYS I HAVE TO EXPECT THE WORST. EVEN IF THE XINDU ARE NO LONGER YOUR ALLIES, I'D PREFER NOT TO TAKE ANY RISKS.





GRAVITOSE AND SERENE AT THE SAME TIME. OFTEN HARSH AND TOUGH TO LIVE IN, IT CREATES A HAPPINESS, STRANGELY ENOUGH, I THINK I WAS STARTING TO LIKE IT HERE.

IT'D IMAGINE THAT'S ALSO THANKS TO THE TWO CHARMING INHABITANTS WHO PAMPERED YOUR TOUGH OLD BACHELOR BONES.

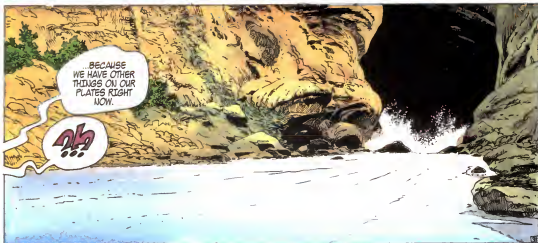


WHY DID YOU GIVE THEM SUCH FUNNY NAMES, THOUGH?

SPEHL-EGG AND EAT? BECAUSE THOSE WERE THE FIRST WORDS THEY SAID IN OUR LANGUAGE.

IT'S TRUE THAT THEY WERE KIND TO ME, THOSE LITTLE TURTLEDONES AND GOOD COOKS, TOO. I'LL MOST CERTAINLY MISS THEM.

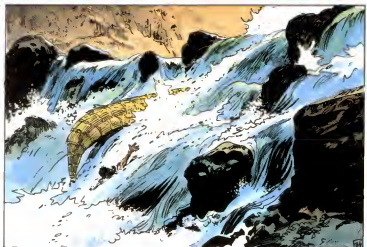
WE'LL TALK ABOUT YOUR LOVES' COOKING LATER, IF YOU DON'T MIND...

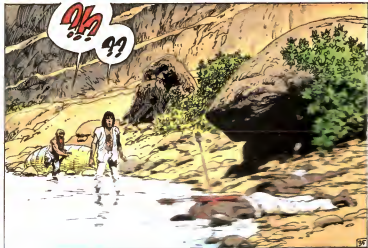
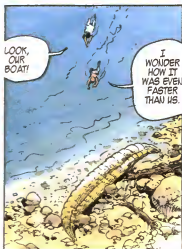
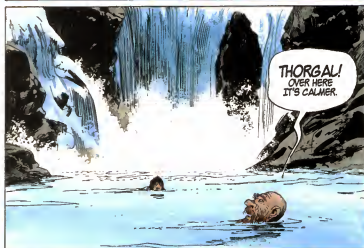


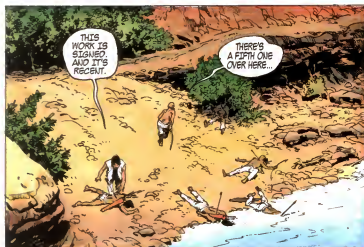
GRAB THE WEAPONS
AND HOLD ON! HERE
WE GO!...



TREE
FOO...







THIS
WORK IS
SIGNED
AND IT'S
RECENT.

THERE'S
A FIFTH ONE
OVER HERE...



OLD
MALOC...

THORGAL! I KNEW... THAT I
SHOULD HAVE... KILLED YOU
RIGHT AWAY. BUT I'M HAPPY...
THAT YOU GOT OUT.
I'VE ALWAYS HAD
RESPECT FOR
YOU.



THAT WOMAN...
IS A DEMON...
SHE LEFT US...
NO... CHANCE...

BUT WHERE'S SHE
GOING? HOW DOES SHE
HOPE TO GET HER GOLD
TO THE GREAT SEAP?



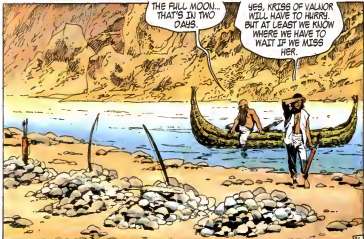
THE BOAT... THE BOAT THAT
BROUGHT YOU HERE WITH
THE CHILD... IT WILL COME
BACK... THIS MONTH ON
THE FULL MOON... TO THE
MOUTH... OF THE RIVER...



DON'T LET ME... DIE...
THORGAL! I'LL SAY... THE
TRUTH... IT'S UEBAC... WHO
WAITED... TO KILL YOU... HE
ORDERED ME... TO ACCUSE
THE HIGH REGENT...
OF... OF...

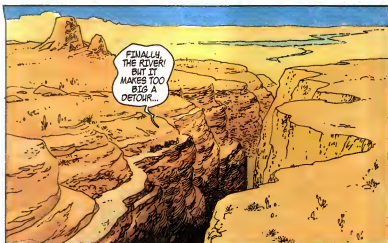


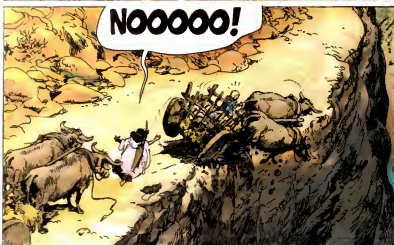
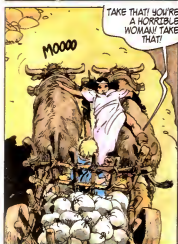
I'M AFRAID HIS
STATEMENT WON'T
BE OF MUCH USE
TO US.

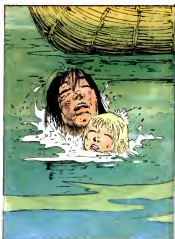
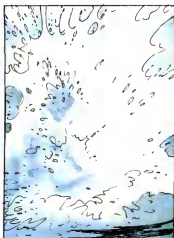
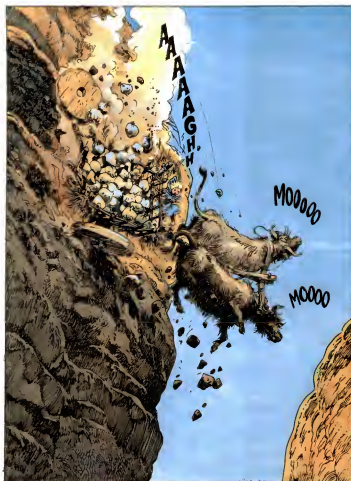


THE FULL MOON...
THAT'S IN TWO
DAYS.

YES, KRISSE OF VALNOR
WILL HAVE TO HURRY.
BUT AT LEAST WE KNOW
WHERE WE HAVE TO
WAIT IF WE MISS
HER.







WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE, TREE FOOT. WE HAVE TO PRESS ON. IF THIS BOAT GETS TO THE ESTUARY ON THE DATE IT'S SUPPOSED TO AND KRIS OF VALAOR REACHES IT BEFORE US, SHE'LL MAKE IT LEAVE WITHOUT WAITING FOR US AND WE'LL LOSE THE ONLY WAY TO GET HOME.



ANYWAY, NEITHER YOU NOR JOLAN WILL BE ABLE TO GO BACK UP THE RIVER ON FOOT. WE'LL HAVE TO CONVINCE THE CAPTAIN OF THE BOAT TO WAIT FOR US FOR A FEW DAYS WHILE I HEAD BACK FOR AARICIA.

AND VARIAS? AND... ERN... SPEHL-BGG AND EAT? WE'AC WILL HAVE THEM KILLED?



THEY COULD STILL COME WITH US... IF I MANAGE TO BRING THEM TO THE ESTUARY...



THORGAL...

EVERYTHING'S FINE, JOLAN. YOU'RE SAFE.



OH, THORGAL, YOU'RE NOT DEAD!... AND TREE FOOT... I WAS SO SCARED... AND AARICIA? WHERE'S AARICIA?

AARICIA IS SAFE TOO.

YOU KNOW, IT'S... WE'AC WHO... HE MADE ME THINK THAT YOU WERE GONE... AND THEN, I HEARD HIM... WITH MALOC... THEY WANTED TO KILL YOU TO...



F... FORGIVE ME, THORGAL... I WAS SO MEAN... SO STUPID... I WANT TO GO HOME WITH YOU... NOW...



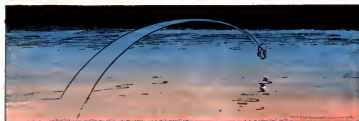
WE'LL LEAVE, JOLAN. AND WE'LL FORGET HIRUKAN FOREVER.

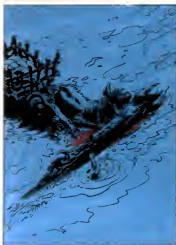
I... I PROMISE YOU THAT.



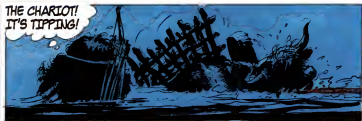
OGOTAI'S CROWN!



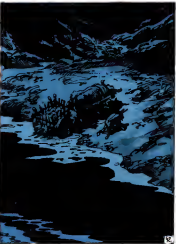
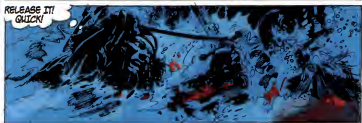


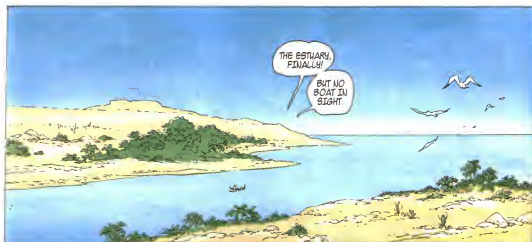


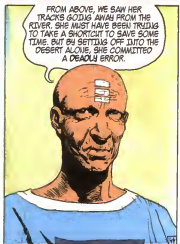
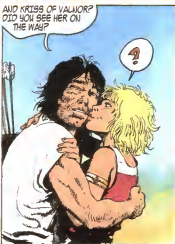
THE CHARIOT!
IT'S TIPPING!

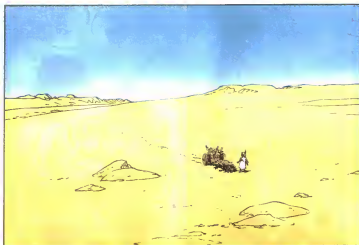


RELEASE IT!
QUICK!









ALL THAT FOR NOTHING!
FOR NOTHING!
FOR NOTHING!



BUT I WON'T LEAVE
MY GOLD! IT'S MINE!
I EARNED IT!



IT'S MY GOLD! IT'S
MINE! I EARNED IT! I
WANT MY GOLD!

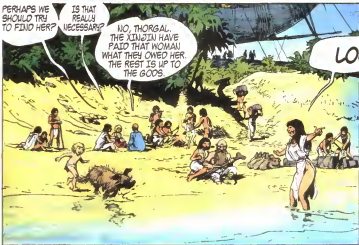


MY GOLD.
IT'S MINE
MY GOLD

PERHAPS WE
SHOULD TRY
TO FIND HER?

IS THAT
REALLY
NECESSARY?

NO, THORGAL.
THE XINGJIN HAVE
PAID THAT WOMAN
WHAT THEY OWED HER.
THE REST IS UP TO
THE GODS.



LOOK!





SO YOU'VE
DECIDED; YOU'RE
STAYING?

YES.

I LEAVE YOU MY
ARMOUR, IF YOU WANT
IT. WITHOUT TAJALL,
THERE'S NOTHING FOR
ME OVER THERE. AND
HERE, THE CLIMATE
IS BETTER FOR MY
RHEUMATISM.

THEN GOOD LUCK,
TREE FOOT. MAY
THE GODS GIVE
YOU A PEACEFUL
HAPPINESS.



THE CLIMATE, EHP
FAREWELL, YOU
OLD DOG. WE'LL
MISS YOU.



I WRONGED YOU,
JOLAN. TRY NOT TO
HOLD IT AGAINST
ME.

I'LL NEVER
FORGET YOU
VARIAN. THE
XINDIN
EITHER.



ANY
REGRETS,
MY LOVE?



NO.
NONE.

KEITH L. JONES

THE END